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**Inventory for
Manuscript Collection
MS - 86**

Isaac W. Linch Papers

1844-1858

by
Elisabeth Meier
January 2019

$\frac{1}{2}$ box
0.2 linear feet
Accession no. 91.25

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Abstract

Linch, Isaac W. (1823-1853)

Papers, 1844-1858

½ box

Shipbuilder and carpenter in Bath, Maine.

This collection contains financial records from Isaac W. Linch, a carpenter and master shipbuilder in Bath, Maine in the mid-nineteenth century. The bulk of the collection consists of receipts for wages that Linch paid to employees at the Trufant, Drummond & Co. shipyard, including some who later became leading shipbuilders in Bath. The remainder is personal, principally receipts for small carpentry work or household expenses. There is no correspondence in the collection.

Gift of Weston L. Bonney.

MS-086. Accession #91.25.

Finding aid (folder level control) in repository.

Added entries—persons:

Linch, Isaac W. (1823-1853)

Added entries—corporate bodies (including vessels):

Alfred Gibbs (ship)

Benjamin Adams (ship)

Mazatlan (ship)

Monsoon (ship)

Trufant & Drummond (Firm)

Added entries—key terms:

Accounts, household

Shipbuilding – Bath (Me.)

Shipbuilding – Employees

Labor

Wages

Acquisition

This collection was donated by Weston L. Bonney of Portland in 1991.

Restrictions

There are no restrictions on this collection.

Physical Condition

The papers are in good condition.

Processing Notes

This collection was apparently first arranged when it arrived at Maine Maritime Museum as an extended loan in the early 1970s. The labor receipts were flattened and alphabetized at that

time. They were probably originally bundled according to the vessel accounts that Linch kept: the paper bands that would have secured such bundles, labeled with vessel names, are in the first folder of each group of labor accounts.

Historical Note

Isaac Weston Linch (sometimes spelled Lynch) was born in 1823 and lived in Bath, Maine. He started his career as a general carpenter, taking on small house projects as well as ship carpentry. By 1850, however, he had become a boss shipbuilder, employing gangs of men to build vessels for the Trufant, Drummond & Co. shipyard. He worked on a number of vessels for Trufant & Drummond in the early 1850s, including the *Mazatlan* (ship), *Alfred Gibbs* (ship), *Benjamin Adams*, (ship), *Helen Snow* (bark), and the clipper *Monsoon* (ship), as well as the *Tonaro* (ship) and *Ingomar* (schooner) for Willard Hall. When he died in 1853, Linch's obituary described him as one of the "most enterprising master ship builders" in Bath.¹

Isaac Linch married Mary Emma Donnell (1822-1891) in 1844. They had one daughter, Emma Francis Linch (1845-1929), and lived near the corner of Washington and Beacon Streets.

Scope and Content Note

This collection holds financial papers from the Bath ship carpenter Isaac W. Linch's career and personal life. It contains a partial record of Linch's rise from a young carpenter to a boss shipbuilder and a detailed record of the laborers employed at the Trufant, Drummond & Co. shipyard in the early 1850s.

The labor receipts list the number of days worked by individual shipwrights and their daily pay. Most are for general labor, but specialized jobs like fastening or making windlasses are occasionally noted. The shipwrights paid by Linch include some men who went on to be Bath's leading builders, including Elijah Sawyer, who was a partner in Goss & Sawyer, and Elisha Mallett, the long-time master builder for Arthur Sewall & Co.

Personal papers include scattered receipts for rent, food, hay, taxes, and other routine expenses. There are also bills and receipts related to small house- and ship carpentry projects that Linch undertook on his own, from making shutters to constructing a gundalow. Receipts for newspaper subscriptions and membership in the Bath Laborer's Association indicate some of Linch's social and intellectual life, though no letters or other explicitly personal material survives. Finally, there is a detailed inventory of the disposition of Linch's estate that lists many of his investments and business connections.

¹ "Deaths," *Bath Daily Times*, December 22, 1853, p. 3.

Box and Folder List

Box Folder

1	1	Bills, receipts and promissory notes, Isaac W. Linch, 1844-1846
2		1847-1848
3		1849-1850
4		1851-1853
Labor bills paid by Isaac W. Linch for work on the following vessels, alphabetized by surname:		
5		<i>Mazatlan</i> (ship), 1850: surnames Baker – Mills
6		Norris – Williams
<i>Alfred Gibbs</i> (ship), <i>Benjamin Adams</i> (ship), and <i>Monsoon</i> (ship), 1851-2:		
7		Adams – Cornish
8		Cowen – Grange
9		Getchell – Holbrook
10		Hubbard – Matson
11		Maxim – Richardson
12		Rideout – Sawyer
13		Scally – Temple
14		Temple – Wright
15		<i>Helen Snow</i> (bark), <i>Ingomar</i> (schooner), <i>Tonaro</i> (ship), and unidentified, 1850-53
16		Estate documents, Isaac W. Linch, 1854-1858